

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1 1. A method comprising:
2 receiving, in a computer system, a set of alternative choices;
3 receiving, in the computer system, a set of criteria by which the set of
4 alternative choices may be evaluated;
5 receiving, in the computer system via a data network coupled to the
6 computer system, a set of weights sent to the computer system by a first set of individuals
7 via the data network, each weight indicating importance of a corresponding criterion from
8 the set of criteria;
9 receiving, in the computer system via the data network, a set of evaluations
10 sent to the computer system by a second set of individuals, each evaluation corresponding
11 to possible attributes of a corresponding criterion; and
12 based on the set of evaluations and the set of weights, providing a relative
13 analysis of the alternative choices.

1 2. The method of claim 1, wherein the relative analysis of the alternative
2 choices comprises ranking the alternatives based on a score derived from a weighted
3 combination of the evaluations, the weighted combination of the evaluations being based
4 on the weights.

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1 10. The method of claim 1, wherein the set of criteria is sent to the computer
2 system by a third set of individuals via the data network.

1 11. The method of claim 1, wherein the set of alternatives is sent to the
2 computer system by a fourth set of individuals via the data network.

1 12. The method of claim 1, wherein one or more individuals of the first set of
2 individuals is a member of the second set of individuals.

1 13. The method of claim 1, wherein no individual is a member of both the first
2 and second sets of individuals.

1 14. The method of claim 1, wherein each of the individuals in the first set of
2 individuals provides a weight for each of the criteria.

1 15. The method of claim 1, wherein one or more individuals in the first set of
2 individuals provides weights for fewer than all the criteria in the set of criteria.

1 16. The method of claim 1, wherein one or more individuals in the second set
2 of individuals provides evaluations for fewer than all the criteria in the set of criteria.

1 17. The method of claim 1, wherein each of the individuals in the second set of
2 individuals provides an evaluation for each of the criteria.

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1 24. The system of claim 21, including requiring a security identification of
2 individuals in the first and second sets of individuals before accepting their respective
3 inputs.

1 25. The system of claim 24, wherein the security identification comprises a
2 password.

1 26. A system for distributed decision processing comprising:
2 data processing means, coupled to a data network, the data processing
3 means for receiving a set of alternative choices and a set of criteria by which the set of
4 alternative choices may be evaluated;
5 a first set of interface means, coupled to the data network, the first set of
6 interface means for transmitting to the data processing means via the data network a set of
7 weights provided by a first set of individuals, each weight indicating importance of a
8 corresponding criterion from the set of criteria;
9 a second set of interface means coupled to the data network, the second set
10 of interface means for transmitting to the data processing means via the data network a set
11 of evaluations provided by a second set of individuals, each evaluation corresponding to
12 possible attributes of a corresponding criteria;
13 means, coupled to the data processing means, for providing a relative
14 analysis of the alternative choices based on the set of evaluations and the set of weights.